Smart Wheeler Ride Safely

Third and Fourth Grade Bicycle Safety and Education Curriculum

Iowa Department of Transportation
Iowa Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

Spring/Fall 2003

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Congratulations

Congratulations for choosing to make your community a safer place for children.

The Smart Wheeler Ride Safely guide provides educators as well as police and park and recreation directors with information to assist in developing a bicycle safety program for schools and communities.

Special Thanks!

Special thanks go to Kathy Ridnour and the Office of Systems Planning at the Iowa Department of Transportation for their work in starting and coordinating this statewide bicycle safety education program, and to the Iowa Department of Transportation for their funding of the program through a special grant.

Acknowledgements

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Smart Wheeler Ride Safely
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Leadership Guide

Section

II

Smart Wheeler Ride Safely

As educators, we work hard to help children prepare for a bright and challenging future. But if we don't teach our children how to avoid preventable injury and death while riding a bicycle, many won't realize their potential. According to the National SAFEKIDS campaign, each year more than 250 children die in bicycle-related crashes. Among children under age 14, more than 80 percent of bicycle-related fatalities are associated with the bicyclist behavior. We must change this health/injury risk facing school-age children today.

About Smart Wheeler

Smart Wheeler Ride Safely is a bicycle education program designed to encourage bicycling as a healthy lifelong activity. Designed for third and fourth grade students, it is to make beginning cyclers more aware of the safety issues that can affect them when they are on their bicycle. It teaches them to handle different skills and as provide knowledge to make positive choices about their personal safety and well-being when riding their bicycle.

Why a Bicycle Safety Education Program?

A bicycle is not a toy; it is a vehicle. Although bicycling is a viable form of transportation, it may pose added risks to students who have not been educated in safe traffic practices.

Bicyclists need training in the proper use of equipment and rules of the road. A good program teaches children safe bicycle riding habits that will prevent injuries by equipping them with skills they will use throughout their lives.

What are Benefits to Children and the Community?

Children

Progressive acquisition of lifetime and lifesaving skills for cycling

Development of decision making skills

Well-developed sense of balance, eye-hand-foot coordination, and other motor skills

Independent mobility

Health and exercise

Lifelong recreation

The Community

Increased number of well-informed pedestrians, bicyclists, and ultimately, drivers

An adult population more likely to use bicycle transportation, thus:

- Less pollution
- Less traffic congestion
- Less energy consumption
- Greater health benefits

What's Special About This Curriculum?

Smart Wheeler Ride Safely is one of the most comprehensive bicycle education and safety curriculums that can be taught in the gymnasium or on the playground with limited equipment. Developed in conjunction with the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the Iowa SAFEKIDS coalition, as well as community safety advocates and national experts, *Smart Wheeler Ride Safely* can be successfully taught by instructors with limited bicycle safety knowledge. It is a fun, active, curriculum that children enjoy.

Why a School-Sponsored Program?

First, a school environment will reach more children consistently. Second, a school- sponsored course will allot a sufficient amount of time for children to learn. Another reason for implementing through schools is that physical educators are trained in teaching techniques that help students learn in a more organized, effective way. *Smart Wheeler Ride Safely* is a sequential, comprehensive program of instruction that fits educational curriculums.

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In the past people thought that handing out some pamphlets and giving a pep talk were effective ways to teach bike safety. No one would think of teaching baseball, football, square dancing, car driving or hunter safety by handing out brochures and talking to an auditorium full of kids. These days, we see it's important to get the kids on their bikes and teach them real world skills.

John Williams & Dan Burden

What's the Most Effective Way to Use Smart Wheeler?

Smart Wheeler Ride Safely is a school, parks department, or police department-taught program. It is presented in six teaching modules with lessons that address bicycling as a healthy activity, and various risk areas that are responsible for the injuries and deaths of students each year. Each module (lesson) can be taught in 30 to45 minutes using a gymnasium, playground, or street adjacent to the school. The units are designed for maximum flexibility so they can be taught in a variety of settings.

Each module not only includes information for students to learn, it provides hands-on (on-bike) learning along with resources to enhance learning for parents and other caregivers. Students can actually see, by videos and activities, situations to avoid and learn from. Included in the course packet for teachers are: course lesson plans, a video, demonstration helmets, teaching resources, community resources, and handout material for reproducing.

How Can Community Organizations Become Involved?

Programs, whether run by the school, police department, or parks department, can use parents and other community patrons to assist with the actual teaching of classes, or setting up and working with evaluation tools such as a bike rodeo.

Why Teach 3rd and 4th Grade Students?

Third and fourth grade students are targeted because:

- They are old enough that the physical skills needed on a bicycle can be performed.
- They are at an age where society and personal values become reinforced.
- Parental influence can enhance and encourage learning.
- An age where effective teaching can be initiated using existing school facilities.
- It is a time when bicycling becomes a mode of transportation (getting to school, getting to a park, etc.)

Students younger than eight years of age do not meet the above criteria.

While a one-day bicycle rodeo can be effective as a community awareness project, it is not sufficient to cover the bicycle safety education needs of school children. It is most effective as a culminating event at the end of a bicycle safety unit of instruction.

Smart Wheeler Ride Safely

Instructors

Although *Smart Wheeler Ride Safely* can be taught with limited bicycle safety knowledge, it is recommended that teachers take a preparation course for instructing the traffic and bicycling skills. Ideally, this preparation involves a one-day in-service training. Health and physical education teachers, classroom teachers, drivers education instructors, police officers, and park and recreation instructors make excellent bicycle safety instructors. Often these educators know the students personally and are aware of their individual capabilities. A team approach works well with indoor lessons led by classroom teachers and teacher aides, and outdoor lessons handled by physical education teachers, police officers, park and recreation instructors, and parent volunteers. The *Smart Wheeler Ride Safely* Program includes 15 statewide one-day bicycle safety workshops for teachers.

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/outreach/kidspage/biketour

Facilities

On-bicycle practice requires a large (50' x100' or larger) gym floor, asphalt or grassy area, or an adjacent street (closed off) next to school. Many of the spaces can be marked off with tape or chalk lines (see addendum for details). If well organized, a class of 24 to 30 can be taught with eight bicycles, possibly furnished by the students. In fact, too many bicycles creates more confusion, and the lessons take longer. It would be ideal if each student had a helmet. This program gives resources where helmets can be purchased at very reasonable costs. But students can share helmets as well in certain situations.

Curriculum Material

Included in the *Smart Wheeler Ride Safely* package is a 5-lesson curriculum including resource material, safety video, and student handouts, parent handouts, and community involvement resources all ready for reproducing. The curriculum is sequenced for best results, but can be taught in segments. For example, lessons one and two can be taught in the classroom (physical education, health, science, police conference room, etc.) with the other parts taught in the gymnasium, on playgrounds, or in parking lots. The video can be shown before the on-bike activities, a day or two before the beginning of a class. However, retainment is best when shown the same day as the on-bike activities.

Statewide Training Workshops

The *Smart Wheeler Ride Safely* Program will provide free-of-charge, 15 one-day workshops for teachers throughout the state. These workshops will be taught by certified cycling instructors and will carry college credit for updating portfolios. The workshops will be held in the 15 AEAs around the state. Workshops will be conducted in January and February for spring participants, and again in June and July for fall participants in the curriculum. Look for details in your mailbox during the school year. Additional information can be obtained from Kathy Ridnour, Iowa Department of Transportation, or George McVicker, FitOne Promotions (see organizations and resources listed at the end of this section).

Financial Commitment

All curriculum materials and training workshops are being provided free of charge to individuals in Iowa schools involved in teaching the curriculum. This service is being sponsored by the Iowa Department of Transportation; the Iowa Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; FitOne Promotions; and many local and statewide sponsors.

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How Can a Bicycle Safety Education Program Be Implemented in My School?

The program requires - teacher training - equipment - facilities - secured time to teach the curriculum

Schools need to identify barriers to program implementation and resolve difficulties pertaining to scheduling and equipment. Physical education teachers will need support and assistance from school administrators and other teachers to arrange the curriculum during the spring or fall semesters to reach all 3rd and 4th graders in the school.

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The Iowa Department of Transportation, is making the bicycle safety education program *"Smart Wheeler Ride Safely"* available to all Iowa elementary schools. They not only will fund the program materials but will make free training sessionsavailable to physical education teachers across the state, to train them in the implementation of the bicycle safety program. These teacher workshops will train teachers,teacher aids, and community safety advocates how to utilize the curriculum to make the program a success in their school or community.

For Additional Financial Assistance: Schools and communities can contact child safety coalitions (e.g., SAFEKIDS, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving), as well as local safety councils, businesses and organizations within the community.

Other agency representatives to contact locally:

Law Enforcement
Community Traffic Safety Team
Community Volunteer Program
PTA or PTO
Local AAA
Traffic Engineering Department (City/County)

Community organizations (bike shops, service clubs, bicycle clubs, etc.) can provide assistance by procuring bicycles, helmets and other equipment, and by assisting teachers. Parent involvement in this program helps ensure its continuation in the schools and provides support for participating teachers.

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Below is a list of organizations and businesses, both statewide and national,that provide various types of information and resources on bicycle safety. Information provided by these agencies is incorporated into this bicycle safety program. Thanks goes out to these organizations for the use of their material and information. You can receive additional information by contacting the agencies and businesses listed below.

Florida Department of Transportation
Safety Office Bicycle Program
605 Suwannee St, MS 82
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450
805-487-1200
www.dot.state.fl.us

League of American Bicyclists
1612 K Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20006-2082
202-822-1333
www.bikeleague.org
bikeleague@bikeleague.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
901 Locust St. Rm 466
Kansas City, MO 64106
1-800-DASH-2-DOT
www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Bicycle Safety Education Resource Center
www.bicyclinginfo.org/ee/fhwa.html

Bikeiowa
biker@bikeiowa.com
www.bikeiowa.com

FitOne Promotions Ltd.
George McVicker
1025 19th Street
West Des Moines, IA 50265
515-225-6966
geomcv@yahoo.com

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine
P.O. Box 5275
Augusta, ME 04332
207 - 623-4511
www.bikemaine.org
BCM@bikemaine.org

Minnesota Community Bicycle Safety Project
200 Transporation & Safety Bldg.
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-626-1077

American Academy of Pediatrics
141 Northwest Point Boulevard
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
847-434-4000
www.aap.org
kidsdocs@aap.org

Iowa Department of Transportation
Kathy Ridnour
Office of Systems Planning
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010
515-239-1713
kathy.ridnour@dot.state.ia.us

League of Iowa Bicyclists, Inc.
P.O. Box 13258
Des Moines, IA 50310
515-225-8648

Youth Educational Sports, Inc.
P.O. Box 4384
Chatsworth, CA 91313-4384
818- 292-0779
www.YESports.org
info@yesports.org

Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute
4611 Seventh St. South
Arlington, VA 22204
703-486-0100
info@helmets.org
www.helmets.org

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety
1440 New York Ave. NW
Suite 201
Washington, DC 20005
202-638-5944
www.aaafoundation.org

Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau
215 E. 7th St.
Des Moines, IA 50319-0248
515-281-6190
gtsbinfo@dps.state.ia.us

Additional information can be found at local and area bicycle shops. Included in the addendum is a list of all bicycle stores (shown by AEA areas) in Iowa. Many of the stores can help students get the equipment they need as well as provide resource information and assistance in conducting the program.

Course Lessons

Section

III

Lesson 1

HOW TO FIT A HELMET

No matter which statistics you read, children have a much greater risk of injury in cycling accidents and falls than adults.

Children receive 76 percent of all bicycling head injuries.

Yet they are less likely to wear a helmet than an adult.

Make sure that children's helmets are SNELL-or-ASTM approved. These standards mean that the helmet has been tested and meets certain safety requirements.

RESOURCES TO USE WITH THIS LESSON

- Demonstration Helmets
- Video on Fitting Helmets

Your Objective: Snug, Level, Stable

Students can't get the most protection from their helmet unless it fits well. You would be surprised how many riders have never adjusted their helmets and suffer from discomfort ride after ride, while the helmet may not really help when they crash. In particular, many do not adjust the straps correctly. In normal riding, the fitting pads keep helmets sitting in place, but the straps are critical when you crash and the head is suddenly jerked about violently. The helmet can come off and leave the head unprotected for the crunch.

Students want the helmet to be comfortably touching the head all the way around, to be level on the head, stable enough to resist violent shakes or hard blows, and to stay in place. You need that to be sure it will be in place to protect the head when it hits the pavement in a a crash. You want a helmet as low on the head as possible to maximize side coverage, fitting uniformly all the way around, with the strap comfortably snug so that they can still open their mouth, without the strap pinching, binding, or cutting into their chin, and the helmet cannot be made to rock back and forth more than an inch.

For Starters: Make Sure You Have the Right Size Helmet

Helmets come in many sizes and shapes: egg-shaped, pointy, elongated, narrow or wide. Helmet manufacturers have different adaptations to producing a helmet that fits as many heads as possible. You should be prepared for the eventuality that the helmet they are trying to fit may not be compatible with student's particular head.

Use the Fit Pads

Helmets always have at least one set of fitting foam pads for the inside. Many come with more than one set, and the second or even third set of thicker pads can be used to customize the shape. With the light helmets we use now, you can often remove the top pad entirely before you start. This lowers the helmet on the head, bringing its protection down farther on the sides where it is needed. On the other hand, it cuts down somewhat on the flow of cooling air by placing the rider's head flush against the inside of the helmet. This fit may not be for everyone, but it works with most people, even in summer, and it can provide a lot of extra side protection.

Adjust the side fit pads by using thinner or thicker pads where there is a space, adding thicker pads on the sides for narrow heads, or thicker pads in the back for shorter heads. They may also move pads, particularly on the "corners" in the front and rear. The objective is to make the helmet fit with pads touching all the way around, without making it so tight that it will be a constant nuisance.

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A note on air channels: for maximum coolness they may want to leave gaps in the fitting pads around the head to let air flow in. The pads may compress slightly in use, but better ones will not compress much, so do not count on that to loosen the fit. The helmet should sit level on the head, with the front just above the eyebrows, or if the rider wears glasses, just above the frame of the glasses so it does not bump on them.

Adjust the Straps

Now have students put the helmet on and fasten the buckle. The tricky part starts here. It may take them as long as 15 minutes to get this part right. That is too long, of course, and easy fitting is one of the next frontiers in helmet development. But the time you spend here will be returned many times over as students ride with comfortable helmets.

The chin strap should be snug against their chin, with the V of the side straps meeting just below their ears, and no slack to let the helmet rock back and forth. First, adjust the length of the rear (nape) straps, the length of the front straps, and the location of the V fitting where the straps come together. That may involve sliding the straps through the top of the helmet to get the length even on both sides. Take a few minutes to figure out the strap configuration and keep adjusting until you get it right. Then adjust the length of the chin strap so it is comfortably snug. If it hangs down visibly or they can slide two fingers under it, it is too loose. If it cuts into their chin and is not comfortable, it is too tight. Now pay some attention to the rear stabilizer if their helmet has one. Many of them have some type of adjustment, and some can even be adjusted while the helmet is on your head. The stabilizer can help a lot to keep the helmet from jiggling around in normal use, but it does not, by itself, keep the helmet on rider's head in a crash. It is still essential to follow these first steps for basic strap adjustment.

When you think the straps are about right, students should shake their heads around. Then have them put their palm sunder the front edge and push up and back. Can they move the helmet more than an inch or so from level, exposing their bare forehead? If so, tighten the strap behind the ear. Again, the two straps should meet just below the ear. Now have them reach back and grab the back edge. Pull up. If they can move the helmet more than an inch, tighten the nape strap. When they are done, their helmet should feel solid on their head and comfortable. It should not bump on their glasses when riding (if it does, tighten the nape strap). If they walk into a wall, the helmet should hit before their noses do.

Note:
With a helmet that fits well on a child, you must be sure the child removes the helmet before climbing trees and playing on playground equipment. Otherwise, there is a risk of catching the helmet and being strangled. This doesn't happen in normal use, even in crashes, but it can happen while climbing trees or monkey bars.

A well-fitted helmet is comfortable. You should forget you are wearing it most of the time, just like a seatbelt or a pair of shoes. If it impinges on your riding enjoyment, something is wrong. If it still does not fit, keep working with the straps and pads, or try another helmet.

LESSON 1 Lesson Plans

Helmet Fit

1. Prior to this class meeting, encourage students to bring their bicycle helmet to school for the lesson. If they don't have a helmet, ask them to bring a ball cap to class so they can share a helmet with another student. Having several extra helmets available from a community resource will speed up the lesson significantly.

   Note: To eliminate the concerns with students sharing helmets, have the students wear a baseball cap with the bill turned around, under the helmet.

2. Have the children touch the hard outer shell. Discuss what it does (i.e., keeps the helmet liner intact during a crash, creates a smooth skidding surface). Have the children touch and check the crushable liner. Discuss how it absorbs the shock of a fall.

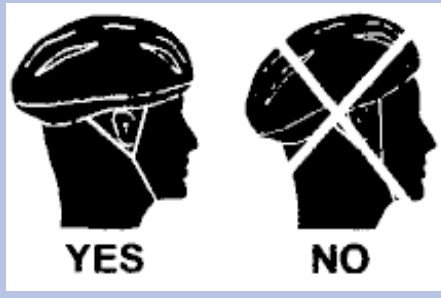
3. Give the children time to buckle and unbuckle the chin strap until they are comfortable doing this. If you have enough helmets, have students pair off to help one another put on helmets. Demonstrate the proper way to tighten the strap so there is only one finger thickness of slack between the chin and strap when buckled.

4. Demonstrate how to position the helmet so there are only three child-size or two adult-size fingers from the eyebrow to the helmet.

5. Show the Video on How to Fit a Helmet (See Resource section). If you prefer, you can show the video first and then do the helmet-fitting process. It can be used as a review tool.

6. If time permits, ask students why they don't or wouldn't wear a helmet when biking.

Answers you will probably receive are: (1) Helmets aren't cool. (2) Helmets just aren't comfortable. (3) I have never worn a helmet and nothing has happened to me so far. (4) I just don't want everybody to see me wearing a helmet. (5) And others. Be prepared to discuss the reasons. This can lead into Lesson 2, Why Wear A Helmet?



Lesson 2

WHY WEAR A HELMET?

Look What Can Happen to Your Head

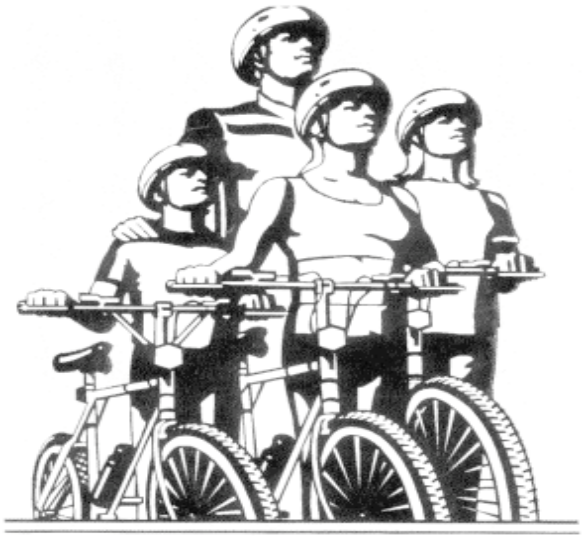
Helmets can prevent head injuries, the main cause of death and disability in bike crashes. Serious bicycle crashes can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere, and at any speed. Parents think their children are safe riding around the neighborhood, but research shows us that most serious bicycle crashes occur on quiet neighborhood streets. This is especially true for young people. And nearly 30percent of all cycling deaths happen on residential streets.

Nationwide, nearly 50,000 bicyclists suffer serious head injuries each year. Many never fully recover. Broken bones or "road rash" can heal, but a head injury can lead to death or disability.

To help understand why, a brief lesson about the brain and how it's protected can be presented to students. This is an optional part of this lesson and is more effective when using charts from the science department.

The outermost layer of the head, the scalp, is the first line of defense. Underneath the scalp is the hard bony skull. The brain itself floats in cerebral spinal fluid, a slippery liquid, and is surrounded by a thin membrane, the dura. The brain joins the spinal cord at the brain stem. Through this junction, messages pass from the brain to the body and back again. The brain is the control center for the body and, as a result, brain damage can affect how--and if--a person's body works.

There are three main types of brain injuries: concussions, contusions, and hemorrhages.



Concussions happen when the brain gets "shaken up" and stops working for a while. Usually, things soon return to normal. However, in a severe concussion, permanent damage can result.

Contusions are bruises caused when the brain hits the rough inside surface of the skull.

Hemorrhages happen in severe cases when the brain bleeds. If this happens, the brain can get squeezed because there's no place for the blood to go unless the skull is opened. This internal bleeding can easily lead to death or permanent brain damage, even though the cyclist may seem okay for days or weeks.

This description of head injuries helps students understand why a helmet is made like it is; why it has a dense foam liner that crushes and absorbs most of the impact in a crash; and why it has a plastic shell, which helps hold the foam together. It also reinforces why a helmet should fit properly and why straps and buckles are important in keeping the helmet from flying off during a fall or a crash. All parts of the helmet work together to prevent injury.

LESSON 2 Lesson Plans

How Can Bicycle Helmets Help?

To demonstrate how bicycle helmets help protect the head during crashes you can do one or more of the following exercises and view the enclosed video.

1. Light Bulb Drop

Wrap a burned-out light bulb in heavy-duty, extra-strength kitchen plastic wrap. Place the wrapped bulb inside a demonstration helmet. A demonstration helmet is one that can no longer be used for head protection. Close the open section of the helmet with a fabric helmet cover or slip the helmet and wrapped bulb into a clear plastic bag. This will keep the wrapped bulb from jumping out of the helmet on impact. Talk with the children about what a human skull and light bulb have in common. Drop the inverted helmet from five feet. Inspect the wrapped bulb. Review why a helmet is constructed like it is.

Now, drop the wrapped bulb without the protection of the helmet. Remind children that each time a helmet hits the ground it loses some of its shock-absorbing capability. A helmet that takes a hard fall should be replaced with a new helmet.

2. Melon Drop

Have the group assemble in a semicircle in front of you. Take a head-sized melon, and strap an old, but still functional, helmet on the melon. Ask what will happen if you drop the melon in a helmet to the floor. Drop it from a height of about five feet. Remove the melon and look for damage. Explain how the melon might not feel good if it were a head, but that it would survive. Explain how the helmet does the same work to absorb the shock of the fall. Show the crushable liner, and pass the helmet around for everyone to look at.

3. Melon Roll

Have the group assemble along both sides of a line 30 feet long. Stand at one end of the line and roll the melon as if it were a bowling ball. Explain how this low “angle of incident” (where an object does not drop to the ground directly, but instead has forward momentum) does less damage to the brain. Look at the melon and note that it may be cracked, but has not fallen apart.

Now take the same melon, and from a height of five feet drop it straight to the floor unprotected. It should splatter, so put plastic down on the floor and back up. Ask the class if the drop represents a "low angle of incident" or a "high angle of incident." Explain that a bike helmet works in both cases, but there is no way for a person to survive any high angle of incident to a hard surface (concrete) without a helmet. Even when standing perfectly still, the head rotates to the side and hits the concrete directly.

4. Show the video Ride Smart "It's Time To Start"

This is a very interesting, funny approach to how helmets can protect the head.

(Note: If time is a factor for your classes and you don't want students standing or sitting instead of being active, doing this lesson in a science class where motion and force and pressure can be taught might be an alternate way to teach it using across-the-curriculum flexibility.)

5. Helmets Aren't Just For Racers - Helmets Look Cool

Investing time in teaching students how to fit a bicycle helmet and telling and showing them why they should wear a helmet is only the start of a successful helmet campaign for your students. If they have a perception that helmets look stupid or un-cool, they won't wear them. And if many parents can't afford them, or don't think helmets are important, all the helmet campaigns in the world won't be fully successful.

Students need to see role models wearing helmets; they need to see pictures and videos showing racers or children wearing helmets , and they need to be reinforced when they do wear their helmet. Parents need to know of ways they can purchase inexpensive helmets that are cool and protect their children's heads. They also need to be reinforced about helmet safety and the importance of their children (and themselves) wearing helmets.

6. Things you can do to encourage helmet wearing when biking are:

- Reward students in some way when they wear their helmet as they bike to school.
- Put up posters or pictures of non-racers wearing helmets (check with a local bike shop).
- Hold a helmet poster contest.
- Post signage at school exits reminding students to wear a bicycle helmet.
- Play videos of racers and non-racers wearing helmets as students enter the gym or classroom.
- Send materials to parents regarding helmet safety.
- Make available to parents resources for purchasing helmets inexpensively.
- Suggest a school rule that all students riding their bikes to school must wear a helmet.

Lesson 3

THE BIKE CHECK

Every cyclist (even third and fourth graders) needs to know how to tell when his or her bicycle is unsafe to ride and needs repair.

Selecting a Bike

The kind of bike students buy should be determined by:

1. **The purpose for which the bike will be used;**
2. **The price they wish to pay;**
3. **Type of usage it will get (rough, medium or light);**
4. **And most importantly, a concern for safety.**

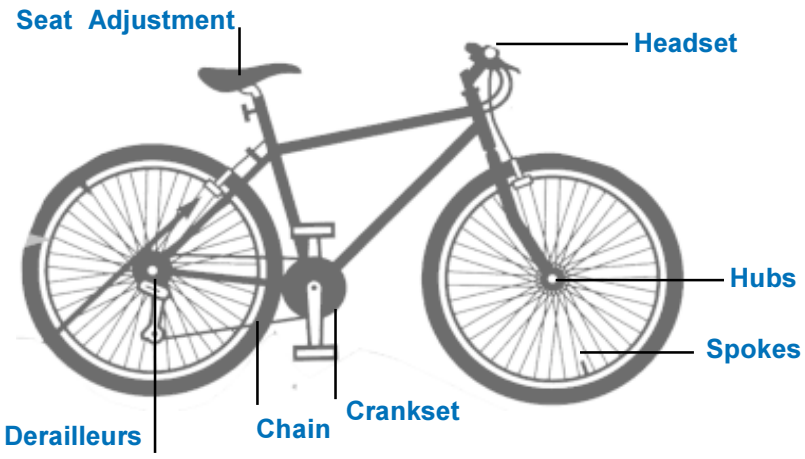
Regardless of the type or model they choose, make sure it fits properly. A bike that is too large or too small is unsafe to ride.

Adjust Bike to Fit You

1. **Make sure you can stand over the bar with both feet flat on the ground**

2. **The seat should allow the feet to just rest on the pedal in down position.**

Basic Bicycle Safety Checklist



Bolts - Be sure bolts on the seat, seat post, handlebar stem and axles are tight.
Headset - Check that the handlebars turn freely and that there is no play when the front brakes are applied and the bike is rocked backwards and forwards.
Brakes - Check that nuts on the brake bolts are tight. Brake pads should not touch the rims unless you are squeezing the brakes.
Hubs - Wheels should spin freely without side play.
Spokes - None broken or missing, uniform tension.
Rims - Centered, run true and round.
Pedals - Turn freely, reflectors secure.
Crankset - Arms tight, no side play, turns freely.
Chain - Lubricated, clean, runs smoothly.
Tires - Properly inflated, good thread.
Reflectors - Both wheels, front and back of frame, secured properly.
Derailleurs - Shifts correctly and easily, cables tight.

Additional informaton for lesson 3 can be found on pages 20 and 21 of The Guide To Bicycle Rodeos included in this packet. Because it would be difficult to have all students bring their bicycles to class, five or six different-sized bicycles (some kids can bring theirs, or borrow a few used bikes from a bike shop) and some tools will be adequate to teach the students how to check out their bicycles for sizing and maintenance.

LESSON 3 Lesson Plans

This might be a good time to bring in an outside resource (biker, bike shop owner, etc.) to help with the sizing and maintenance basics. Having several parents available will speed up the process. Having parents available will also reinforce the bike safety issues at home.

Students can take a copy of the bicycle inspection form found on page 43 of The Guide to Bicycle Rodeos, get in groups of four to five (depending on the number of bicycles available) and check out the bike for maintenance. If you don't have enough helpers, do the lesson as a group.

Students can take copies of the bicycle inspection form home with them and check out their own bicycle after the information is covered in class.

Lesson 4

SAFE RIDING SKILLS

The real world skills that are necessary to be safe on a bicycle are simple, yet young students just starting to ride seriously do not possess many of these skills. Many times it is assumed that if we know how to ride a bicycle, we also know how to handle the bicycle in different motion situations.

Good riding skills are necessary to reinforce reactions in certain situations. Remember, young children are not small adults. They often act before thinking and sometimes their actions put them into dangerous situations. Being able to control the bike effectively in dangerous riding circumstances is very important. Parents often think their children are able to handle traffic situations safely before they are actually ready. Many parents believe their children don't need all this bicycle safety stuff because they were never injured as a children Afterall, biking is just meant to be fun.

One important thing that must be reinforced with students and parents is that bicycles are not toys. Bicycles are vehicles.

Children should not ride bikes in the road until they can fully control the bike and understand traffic rules and show they can follow them.

Young Children Are NOT Small Adults

In addition to improving the physical skills for young bikers, we must help them react and keep the bike under control because:

1. They often act before thinking and may not do what parents or drivers expect.
2. They assume that if they see the driver, the driver sees them.
3. They can't judge speed, and they think cars can stop instantly.
4. They are shorter than adults and can't see over cars, bushes and other objects.

Riding Skills To Be Taught

1. **Scanning:** Teach children control of their bicycle while riding in a straight line and looking back over their shoulder to identify oncoming traffic. Most students will lose control of the straight line the first time they try this.
2. **Mounting and Dismounting:** Starting and stopping while maintaining control becomes a safety issue at stop signs, driveways, etc.

3. Circling and Changing Directions: Balance and steering control while changing directions will help students keep from falling, running into curbs, or even worse, going into traffic.

4. Weaving and Maneuvering: Many times there are obstacles in the biker's path such as large rocks, tree branches, old mufflers, etc., and they need to judge distance and maintain steering control while avoiding these obstacles.

5. Stopping Ability: Braking suddenly and mantaining control is the last skill students should be taught. It should be instructed so as to improve judgment and braking control.

LESSON 4 Lesson Plans

Because these riding skills are so critical, it is important that as a class you take time to make sure each student has a chance to learn the skill being taught. It might be best to use more than one class period to teach this lesson.

Lessons will go faster and be more effective if parents are asked to help.

1. Scanning The Guide to Bicycle Rodeos (page 32), teaches the kids to look behind for traffic. Again, you can use the same minimal equipment and accomplish this in a gymnasium.

A lesson to involve students and get them thinking about looking back at the proper time is to have the children stand with a partner. The coaching partner will face the rider while standing behind the rider. As the rider takes off and moves down the course,the coaching partner gives the command, "look". The rider scans to the rear, quickly, and resumes looking forward. "What did you see?" asks the partner. The rider answers. This activity continues, allowing the rider many quick scans over the shoulder during each trial. Reverse roles after several tries. It may be necessary for the teacher to prompt the coaches the first few times. This will help establish a pattern for looking back and identifying images. Remind the children they must pay attention to the traffic and riding enviroment ahead of them, in addition to frequently scanning to the rear.

Some information about traffic flow

Although traffic flow is regulated by various ordinances and statutes, some of which apply specifically to bicycle use, it's very important for children to understand the theory underlying traffic regulations. Afterall, blind compliance to some concept of "The Law" may be necessary at times, but it isn't a sound basis for effective teaching.

Emphasize that traffic laws aren't designed arbitrarily, or to restrict freedom. Rather, they enhance standardized predicatable behavior in traffic situations which would otherwise be dangerous. If bicyclists wish to be observed by drivers, they must be in a place where drivers expect them to be.

2. Mounting and Dismounting Purpose: To demostrate starting and stopping while maintaining control.

Lay out several lanes (four to five students per lane) laid out on the floor or playground

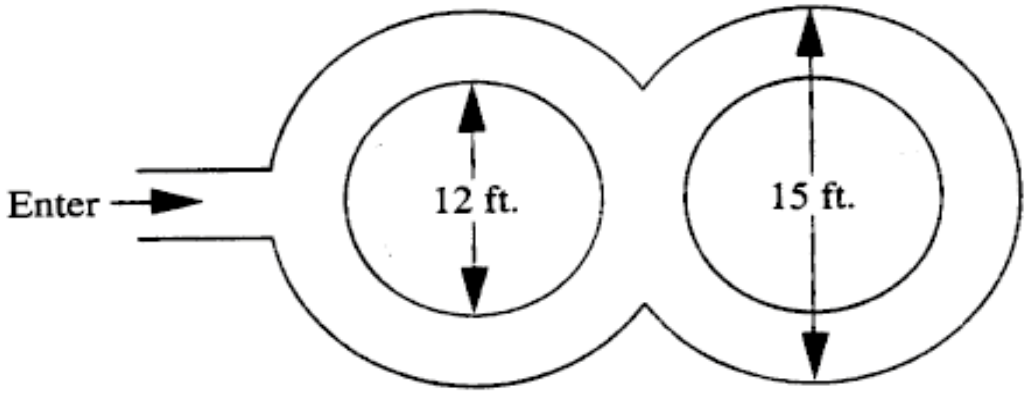
The rider must mount, steer the bike without losinghis or her balance or swerving out of the lines and then dismount at the end. Have the student turn around,remount, and come back, maintaining balance and dismounting at the end.

You can also have students walk the bike back and hand it off to the next student in line for faster move throughs.

See resource matrial for setting up this drill and testing students through a scoring system.

3. Circling and Changing Directions Purpose: To test balance and steering control while changing directions.

Lay out the following pattern(s) on the gym floor or on the playground. You might want to use cones in place of lines on the floor or ground for ease of set-up.

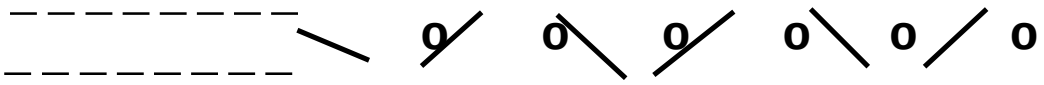


Riders should start to the right and maneuver through the circles in a figure eight. Ideally, the students should go through two times, the second time starting to his or her left.

See resource materials, for settingup this drill and testing students through a scoring system.

4. Weaving and Maneuvering Purpose: To test balance, steering control, and rider's ability to judge distance.

Lay out the following pattern(s) on the gym floor or playground using cones.

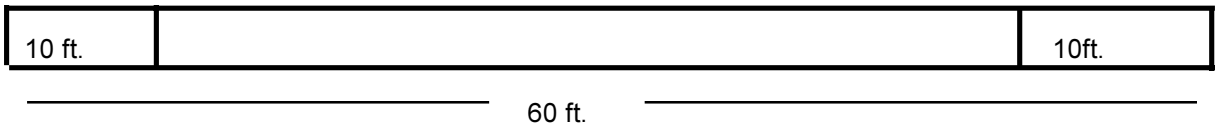


The rider shouldn't hit the obstacles and should weave alternately to the right and left. If time permits have the students ride back in the same pattern.

See resource materials for setting up this drill and testing students through a scoring system.

5. Stopping Ability Purpose: To test judgment and braking control.

Use the same pattern as the one used for mounting and dismounting with some modification.



Rider should ride through the first 50 feet and be able to bring the bike to a complete stop before touching either foot to the ground within the last 10 feet.

See resource materials for setting up this drill and testing students through a scoring system.

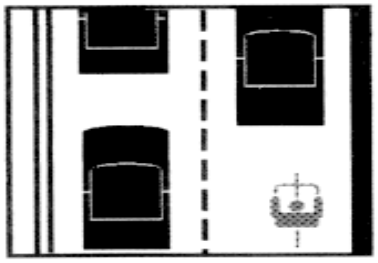
Lesson 5

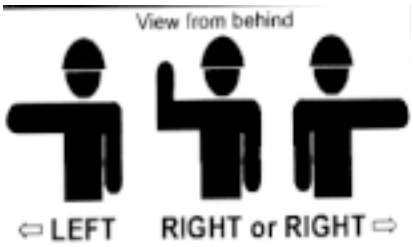
ALWAYS BE AWARE OF THE TRAFFIC AROUND YOU

Road Position - Riding With Traffic

Students should be aware of riding with and not against traffic on the roads and streets. There are some valid reasons for riding with traffic.

- The law in Iowa requires cyclists to ride with traffic (in the same direction as motor vehicles).
- Motorists do not expect to see traffic coming in the opposite direction. If bicyclists expect to be seen they must ride where motorists expect to see traffic, on the right.
- Wrong-way riding results in nearly one-fourth of all bike crashes with motor vehicles.
- Traffic control devices face the normal flow of traffic.
- Cyclists who ride with traffic, on the right, face the danger of a head-on crash with a wrong-way rider.





Road Position - Turning and Signaling

It is important that children learn where to position themselves in traffic when making left and right turns or traveling straight through an intersection. This is an important part of being a predictable cyclist. Using the proper hand signals to communicate with motorists is a significant part of bicycle safety. Lesson plans in this chapter demonstrate, step-by-step, how to turn right, go straight through an intersection, turn left, and the correct road position for each skill.

Riding Out of Driveways

Kids can learn to avoid the biggest cause of motor vehicle/bike accidents for young riders: riding out of driveways without looking.

The Guide to Bicycle Rodeos (pg. 28) deals very well with this safety skill. It is something you can set up in the gymnasium with a little imagination and some minor art work. It could also be set up in a parking lot with actual cars parked in a manner to emulate a driveway.

Cyclists should stop and look both ways before riding into the street. If traffic is coming, they must wait until it's clear, then look again and enter the roadway when safe. Practicing this over and over is the best way to educate students about the proper methods.

Smart Wheeler Ride Safely

Following the teaching of road position, turning and signaling, and riding out of driveways, students are ready to begin negotiating an intersection, a difficult skill to learn. They must put their riding skills and recognition skills together with the rules of the intersection.

Again, because this lesson is so important, you might want to spend several class periods in instruction to help students learn it correctly.

LESSON 5 Lesson Plans

1. Riding With Traffic

a. Discuss with students the reasons for riding on the right with traffic.
b. Make and show overhead from program resource material.

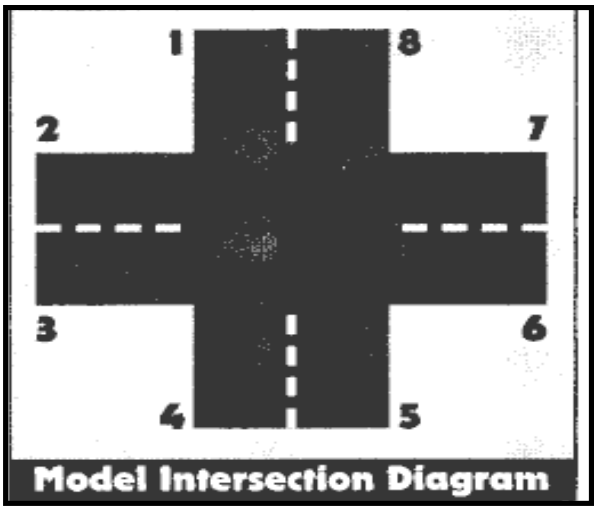
2. Riding Out of Driveways

Use the lesson information on pages 28 and 29 of The Guide To Bicycle Rodeos to formulate a lesson on riding out of driveways.

3. Intersection Riding

The Guide To Bicycle Rodeos (pg. 30) teaches kids to stop at stop signs and wait for pedestrians and conflicting traffic. It can be used as is, or modified for your situation. Check with police or law enforcement officials to see if they have a demonstration traffic light you could borrow.

Using cones and floor tape or some other floor markers, lay out an intersection (see model below). The intersection should have eight model intersection destination points. If you would like to work with intersection walking as well as intersection bicycle riding, children would have the opportunity to locate the eight intersection destination points and learn the proper procedures used to get from one to another. Time may be a factor, and you can choose to do both or just the bicycle intersection procedures.



Model Intersection Diagram

The following activities are designed to give children the opportunity to make decisions about the route they select to reach a specific destination. The underlying concept is that there is usually more than one way to get there, and we must have some previous experience to call upon to make a decision. This teaching technique empowers children to make decisions and move without direct instruction from the teacher. Use giant-numbered cards set up in a counter-clockwise direction around the perimeter of the intersection to identify destinations.

Using the eight numbered destinations, the children will ride bicycles through the intersection. Each destination will be identified by a giant numbered card that has three large colored dots (red, blue, yellow) on it. (You can also have three different colored cards with numbers on them). Inside each colored dot is a number. Each colored dot identifies the child's next destination. The cards are coded, RED = RIGHT TURN, BLUE = RIDE THROUGH, and YELLOW = LEFT TURN.

Begin with one bicycle at each of the following destinations: 2, 4, 5, 8. Divide the class into eight groups. Send one group to each destination. On the command "GO" each bicyclist rides to his new destination. As the bicyclist reaches his destination, he or she will give the bicycle to the first person in line and go to the end of the line. The new bicycle rider will look at the colored dot used for the day's lesson and proceed to the station identified inside that colored dot.

Establish a well-defined stop signal: two blasts on the whistle, a command on the bull horn, etc. When the command is given, all traffic stops. Children riding will immediately get off the roadway and wait for further instructions. Position yourself at the center of the intersection. You should be able to see all destinations and children.

Example of Red Dot Loop-Right Turns

At destination #1 the red dot reads "2"; every child that leaves #1 will ride to #2. When the rider gets to #2, she dismounts the bicycle, gives it to the first child in line, and then goes to the end of the line. At Destination #2 the red dot reads "3"; the child rides the bicycle to #3 using the proper lanes and space. Reaching #3, the child gives the bicycle to the first child in line and goes to the end of the line. At Destination #3 the red dot reads "4"; upon reaching #4 the rider gives the bicycle to the first child in line and moves to the end of the line. At Destination #4 the red dot reads "5"; 5 leads to 6, 6 to 7, 7 to 8 and 8 back to 1. This is an endless loop of right turns and gives you individual instruction time with any child while all children are on task.

Select the red-colored dot and allow children to ride only to the destinations identified by that colored dot. All children will be making right turns.

You can add the Blue Dot Activity, which is Ride Through, and the Yellow Dot Activity, which is Left Turns. Emphasize with each the proper techniques of stopping, looking, signaling, looking again ,and then proceeding. As the children become more proficient you may wish to use the activities in different combinations. This really forces children to look over and understand the situation so they don't hit another biker.

Resource Materials

Section

IV

Smart Wheeler Ride Safely

The following pages include various resource materials that can be copied and used as hand outs or reference material for the curriculum.

Tips for Getting Your Kids to Wear Bicycle Helmets *(pg. 22-23).* A handout for parents, it can be used to educate and reinforce student's choice to wear a bicycle helmet. Designed to make helmet wearing a pleasant task. Sample use: Make copies and send home with students.

Bicycle Helmet Poster Contest *(pg. 24).* A resource, if doing a poster contest is appealing to you. It gives examples of directions and things to do in developing a poster contest. It is designed to enhance helmet wearing, but can be modified for any of the bicycle safety curriculum topics.

Popular Helmet Campaign Messages to Reinforce Helmet Wearing *(pg 25).* A list of funny, serious, educational messages that can be used in a handout, as signs, as notes to start a class, etc.

Sample Parent Letter *(pg 26).* It can be used with modification, or you can re-write it. Makes parents aware of the program and encourages them to work with their student during the unit.

Poster: Bike Helmets, Don't hit the road without one *(pg 27).* Make copies on poster board, in color, larger or however you wish to present it. Students can place them in store windows, around school, on trail entrances (make a metal copy) or any other place where students and parents would see them.

Rules For Using Iowa's Off-Road Trails *(pg 28-29). A good way to use these would be to make individual cards either on card stock or laminate them and have students carry them with them. They can also pickup one for their parents. You can also enlarge and make a sign for trailheads.*

Sharing Iowa's Roads With Bicycles *(pg 30).* Used in similar ways as the Rules for Off-Road Trails, these cards continue to reinforce safety issues that are very important for young cyclists.

Safe Bicycling In Iowa (pg 31). A tri-fold brochure, it illustrates safe bicycling tips to reinforce safety. It can be made into a poster and placed by doorways in your school.

Sharing Iowa's Roads With Bicycles, Safety Tips for Motorists *(pg 33).* For drivers of motor vehicles, these cards can be used in a similar way as the other cards, but are designed to be given to parents or older siblings to reinforce safe driving.

Bike Helmet Safety Book Marks *(pg 34).* Can be printed and distributed to students.

TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR KIDS TO WEAR BICYCLE HELMETS

Parent Tip # 1: Choosing a Bicycle Helmet

Make sure it fits. The helmet should fit snugly but not be tight. It should sit level on the head and shouldn't rock either side to side or front to back.

Make sure it meets the standards. Look for a sticker inside that says it is Snell-approved or meets the ASTM standard. By law, it will meet the ANSI standard.

Make sure it's adjustable. Fine tuning the helmet's fit with foam sizing pads and strap adjustments can make a big difference in comfort and safety.

Make sure the child likes it. It's a lot easier to get a child to wear a helmet if he or she helps pick it out and likes it.

Is it important to keep the head cool?

Bicyclists are their own engines and produce heat; a lot of this heat radiates out through the head. All current helmets have slots or holes to let in air. Although the number of openings may be a sales point, it is mostly the size of the front vents that determines how cool a helmet will be.

What about looks and fashion?

Less than 10 years ago bicycle helmets looked like buckets or ugly mushrooms. They were hot,often uncomfortable, and weighed a ton! But not today! Today they look great, feel light and cool and protect better! They come in all sorts of fashion colors with great looking covers and graphics. And there's a style to suit everyone.

Parent Tip # 2: Fitting Your Child's Helmet

First get the right size helmet. Helmets come in sizes from small to extra large. Each size fits a range of head sizes. Find one that fits comfortably and doesn't pinch. Let your child try the helmet on.

Use the sizing pads for a comfortable fit. Most helmets come with different sized foam pads. Use these to "fine tune" the helmet's fit to your child's head shape.

Finally adjust the straps for a snug fit. The helmet should sit level on the head, cover the forehead down to the eyebrows, and not rock back and forth or side to side. Helmets have adjustable straps to help you get them level and snug. The adjustments are fussy, so be prepared to spend a few minutes doing it.

Parent Tip # 3: How to Get a Child to Wear a Helmet

Establish the helmet habit early. Have your children wear helmets as soon as they start to ride bikes, even if they are passengers on the back of adult's bikes. If they learn to wear helmets whenever they ride bikes, it will become a habit for a lifetime. It's never too late however, to get your children into the habit of wearing a bicycle helmet.

Wear a helmet yourself. Kids learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride your bike, put on your helmet. Plan bicycle outings during which all family members wear their helmets to futher reinforce the message. The most important factor influencing children to wear helmerts is riding with an adult who wears a helmet.

Talk to your kids about why you want them to protect their heads. There are many things you can tell your children to convince them of the importance of helmet use. 1. Bikes are vehicles, not toys. 2. You love and value them and their intelligence. 3. They can hurt their heads permanently or even die from head injuries. Most professional athletes use helmets when participating in sports.

Reward your kids for wearing helmets. Praise them; give them special treats or privileges when they wear their helmets without having to be told so.

Don't let children ride their bikes unless they wear their helmets. Be consistent. If you allow your children to ride occasionally without their helmet, they won't believe that helmet use is really important.

Encourage your children's friends to wear helmets. Peer pressure can be used in a positive way if several families in the neighborhood start making helmet use a regular habit at the same time.

Remember, accidents causing head injuries can occur on sidewalks, driveways, bike paths and parks, as well as on streets. You and your children cannot predict when a fall from a bike will occur. It is important to wear a helmet on every ride, no matter how short.

Parent Tip # 4: Playgrounds and Helmets Don't Mix!

This is a warning, rather than a tip. The potential for strangulation by a helmet strap on playground equipment is known since several such incidents have been reported recently. Children should always wear helmets while riding their bikes. But when a child gets off the bike, take off the helmet. Parents should make sure their children remove their helmets before climbing trees or playing on playground equipment.

Bicycle Helmet Poster Contest

Here are suggestions to get students thinking about a poster contest. This could be an "across the curriculum" project with the art department or with another department.

Make a flyer for students to inform them of the contest. Arrange for prizes like dilly Bars, pizza, whoppers, water slide passes, surpees, movie passes, etc. to be given away. You can even use bicycle helmets for prizes.

Example Flyer information:

(You can add other information you wish to include)

POSTER CONTEST

Be one of the many_____(school, class, etc.) students to win one of the (50, 100, 200, etc.) prizes to be given away in the bicycle safety program/bicycle helmet contest.

Do a collage, write a poem, do a drawing, express your ideas on bicycle safety and the advantages of wearing a bike helmet. Use your creativity!

All the posters will be hung at school for (one, two, etc.) weeks. After that, many of them will be displayed in the windows of local merchants. So gather up your thoughts on bicycle safety, take the information you learned in bicycle safety class about helmet safety, and express them in your own art form.

(First place, class winners, etc.) will receive a prize and a free bicycle helmet with your choice of colors.

Posters displaying the prizes for the poster contest are located outside the (office, gymnasium, LLC, etc.) Helmets are on display in (my office, display case, front office etc.).

Due date: (You name the date) Turn posters in during your physical education class.
All work must be orginal and done on or attached to poster board, colored paper or card stock.

POPULAR HELMET CAMPAIGN MESSAGES TO REINFORCE HELMET WEARING

Here is an assortment of messages that have in the past created a spark that catches students attention and provokes action. Some are certainly better than others ,but all of them can give you ideas. Rather than copying them all, use these messages to spark your own creatiivity.

“Are you cool enough to wear a helmet?”

“Use your head...use a helmet.”

“Don’t knock yourself out on a bicycle. Get a bike helmet today!”

“Helmets are for cyclists who think for themselves...and want to go on thinking.”

“Protection: you’re not born with it. Wear your bicycle helmet.”

“Protect your head - Wear a helmet!”

“Keep your brains where they belong: In your head!”

“Don’t be a street stain. Wear your helmet.”

“Heads you win.”

“Friends don’t let friends ride ignorant!”

“Keep your head in a safe place...wear a helmet.”

“Be a well dressed cyclist - wear a helmet.”

“Bike helmets... the smart choice.”

“Protect your head. Where would you be without it?”

“Bike helmets - Don’t hit the road without one.”

“If we could predict when accidents are going to happen, there wouldn’t be any!”

SAMPLE PARENTS' LETTER

Dear Parents;

As part of our school's approach to foster and teach safety issues we will be conducting a SMART WHEELER RIDE SAFELY bicycle safety program for your third and fourth grade students in physical education class. This program is a simple, fun, activity that will help us teach your child some important bicycle safety lessons. If your student has a bicycle helmet, we would encourage him or her to bring it to school on the days we have the safety course.

The lessons will teach Helmet Safety, Equipment Safety, Bicycling Skills, Safe Riding on Streets and Bike Paths, and Traffic Rules and Dangers.

The program is a comprehensive course with videos, handouts and take home materials. We would encourage you to take time with your student and discuss the materials they bring home. The goal of this unit is to reduce the number of bicycle injuries or potential injuries by educating students and promoting safety as well as promoting bicycling as a lifelong healthy, active lifestyle choice.

Last year over 500,000 emergency room visits were attributed to bicycle related accidents. Over 1,000 people die each year while riding their bicycles, with over 600 being children under the age of 14. Most of these accidents were preventable and would not have occured with better knowledge of bicycle safety, and better riding skills.

We hope that you will encourage your student as they participate in this unit and take the time to discuss the materials your student(s) brings home, and reinforce with them the safe riding skills we will be laying the groundwork for.

If you would like to volunteer to assist in teaching this class please contact me at:

Sincerely,

Physical Education Teacher

BIKE HELMETS

Don't hit the road without one.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

RULES FOR USING IOWA'S OFF-ROAD TRAILS

BICYCLISTS

- Always wear a helmet.
- Yield to pedestrians and skaters.
- Give audible warning when passing other trail users. A friendly greeting like, "Hello, passing on your left," or ringing a bell is considerate.
- Ride at a safe speed. Slow down and form a single file in congested areas, reduced visibility or other hazardous conditions.

PEDESTRIANS AND SKATERS

- Use the right side of the trail, except when otherwise designated.
- Watch out for other trail users.
- Listen for audible signals and allow faster trail users to pass safely.

RULES FOR USING IOWA'S OFF-ROAD TRAILS

ALL TRAIL USERS

- Show courtesy to others.
- Use the right side of the trail, except when otherwise designated.
- Obey all traffic signs and move to the side when looking at a scenic view.
- Always pass on the left.
- Follow all trail rules and hours.
- Respect the rights of property owners.
- Keep pets on a leash and remove pet feces from trail.
- Travel with a buddy in case of an emergency.

PM 858 8-5-02

Courtesy of the Iowa Department of Transportation

SHARING IOWA'S ROADS WITH BICYCLES

Under Iowa law, bicyclists must follow the same rules of the road as motorists.

SAFETY TIPS FOR BICYCLISTS

- **ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET**
- **RIDE ON THE RIGHT**
  Ride in the right lane, except when passing another vehicle, preparing for a left turn, or avoiding hazards.
- **NEVER RIDE AGAINST TRAFFIC**
  Always ride **with** the flow of traffic.
- **OBEY TRAFFIC SIGNS AND SIGNALS**
  Use hand signals to advise motorists you plan to turn, change lanes or stop.
- **MAKE EYE CONTACT WITH MOTORISTS**
  Never assume a motorist sees you or that you have the right-of-way. Expect the unexpected such as: parked vehicles pulling into traffic; vehicle doors opening into your path; and debris on the road.
- **AT NIGHT USE A HEADLIGHT, TAIL-LIGHT AND REFLECTORS**

PM 858 8-6-02

Courtesy of the Iowa Department of Transportation

SHARING IOWA'S ROADS WITH BICYCLES

Under Iowa law, bicycles have a right to use Iowa's roads.

SAFETY TIPS FOR MOTORISTS

- **DO NOT HONK YOUR HORN AT BICYCLISTS**
  They may be startled and lose control.
- **USE EXTRA CAUTION WHEN PASSING BICYCLES**
  Move entirely into the left lane; on a two-lane road, don't pass a bicycle if oncoming traffic is near.
- **BICYCLISTS MIGHT SWERVE TO AVOID ROAD HAZARDS**
  Common road hazards for bicyclists are potholes, debris, drainage grates, railroad tracks, and narrow bridges.
- **BE CAREFUL WHEN OPENING YOUR VEHICLE DOOR**
  Road widths often force bicyclists to ride close to parked vehicles where they may be injured by an opening door.
- **WHEN IN DOUBT, YIELD TO BICYCLES**

Bicycling, once considered a recreational activity for the young, has suddenly become a popular means of transportation for adults. The recent rise in fuel costs, an increased interest in physical fitness and concern for the environment have resulted in a growing number of adults choosing to commute by bike.

The benefits of commuting by bicycle are numerous, and include saving money, promoting good health and energy conservation. However, the combination of bicycles and motor vehicles on public roads is not always a pleasant experience. Increasing numbers of cyclists on city streets lead to increased conflicts with motor vehicles and can endanger both vehicle operators.

Your trip to and from work can be a safer and more enjoyable experience if you follow the basic "rules of the road" contained in this brochure. Your best protection is your knowledge of traffic laws, your skill in handling the bicycle and your ability to deal with hazards if they appear.

Remember, you and your bike are not easily seen by motorists. Unless you are a skilled cyclist, avoid congested streets and restrict your cycling to bikeways, bike lanes, paths and lightly traveled streets.

RIDE DEFENSIVELY

Watch out for others.

Watch Out For:

- pedestrians
- potholes
- debris
- drain grates
- bumps
- rocks
- dogs
- loose gravel
- wet pavement
- low-hanging branches

Control your speed when you observe these hazards and avoid sudden stops or swerving into the path of traffic.

Protect Your Bicycle

- Always lock your bike when left unattended. Secure it to a strong stationary object. Use a bike rack whenever possible - avoid damage to trees, fences and other property.
- If possible feed a chain through both wheels and the frame and then around the stationary object. If not, make sure the chain goes through the rear wheel and frame.
- Park your bike in a place sheltered from the weather if possible.
- Register your bike if your community has a registration/licensing program.
- Encourage your employer to provide safe bicycle parking facilities.

For further information contact:

Iowa Department of Transportation

Planning and Programming Division
Office of Systems Planning
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010
515-239-1713

PM 437 5-7-01

Safe Bicycling in Iowa

Iowa Department of Transportation

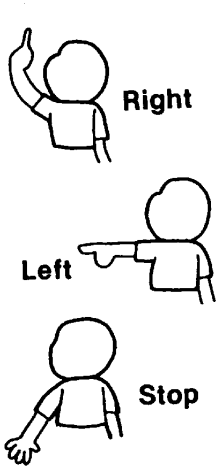
Safe Bicycling in Iowa

Know the Laws Affecting Bicycles

Under Iowa law, bicyclists must generally comply with the same rules of the road as the drivers of motor vehicles.

Bicyclists using the roadways are required to **obey all traffic signs**, signals and roadway markings.

Use hand signals to advise other vehicle operators of your intention to turn, change lanes or stop.



Yield to other vehicles when necessary.

If you ride at night, Iowa law requires that your bike be equipped with a white light on the front and a red light or reflector on the back, both of which must be visible for at least 300 feet.

No bicycle may be equipped with a siren or whistle.

In addition to the state laws outlined above, cities and towns may have ordinances regulating the operation of bicycles. For example, some communities require bicycle registration and/or licensing. You can determine what local ordinances apply to bicycles in your area by contacting the local police department or the city clerk.

Route Selection

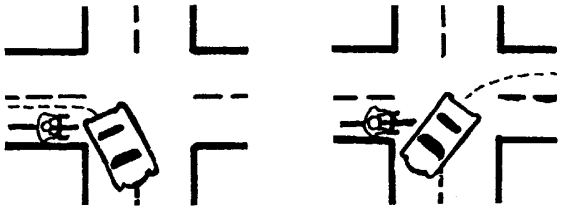
As a bicycle commuter you will need to carefully select the route you take to and from work. If separate bicycle facilities are available, use them.

If not, select lightly traveled streets, considering traffic volumes, intersection conditions, hills, and your own bicycling ability. Choose a route that you can ride comfortably with the gears provided on your bike, and a route on which you feel comfortable.

Ride only on authorized streets or highways. In Iowa bicycles are not allowed on the interstate highway system or where otherwise prohibited. Check with your local police department for information about bike routes or paths in your community.

Safe Cycling Tips

- Use bicycle paths , or ride single file on the right side of the roadway with the flow of traffic.
- Watch out for parked cars pulling into traffic, or car doors opening into your path.
- Obey all traffic signs, signals and road markings.
- Use proper hand signals whenever you turn, change lanes or stop.
- Use caution at intersections. Watch out for cars turning across your path - and be prepared to stop.



- Yield to autos and pedestrians. Dismount and walk your bike across busy streets.
- Wear light or brightly colored clothing to make yourself more visible to motorists.
- Be sure to keep your bike in good condition by performing regular maintenance.
- Don't carry passengers or packages that interfere with your vision or control of the bike.
- Use voice, horn or bell to warn others.
- Make sure your bike is properly equipped for night riding.
- Wear a helmet to prevent serious head injury.
- Use a rear view mirror to check on traffic behind you.
- Ride predictably - avoid sudden unexpected movements.

Don't hit the road
without one.

A reminder from
the Iowa Department
of Transportation

Lesson 4 Safe Riding Skills (Testing and Scoring)

Test # 1 Scanning

Using the diagram in The Guide to Bicycle Rodeo's on page 32, with tape or floor markings lay out the station.

Purpose: To test students on what they have learned in looking back over their shoulder for traffic.

Scoring: 100 pts. The child rides very straight and shouts the right answer.
90 pts. The child weaves or wobbles some but generally rides straight and shouts the right answer.
80 pts. The child weaves about a foot in one direction or the other but stays within the boundary and shouts the right answer.
70 pts. The child weaves outside the lane. The child shouts wrong answer.

Test # 2 Mounting and Dismounting

Using the diagram on page 16 of the Smart Wheeler Ride Safely (SWRS) book, lay out the station on the floor.

Purpose: To demonstrate starting and stopping while maintaining control. Rider must mount, steer bike without losing balance or swerving out of the lines and then dismount at the end. Have the student turn around,remount, and ride back maintaining balance and dismounting at the end.

Scoring: 100 pts. Up and back without riding outside of the lines or losing balance and then dismounting under control.
90 pts. One mistake of riding outside the lines, losing balance or losing balance while dismounting.
80 pts. Two mistakes of riding outside the lines, losing balance or losing balance while dismounting.
70 pts. More than two mistakes.

Test # 3 Circling and Changing Directions

Using the diagram on page 16 of the SWRS book, lay out the station on the floor.

Purpose: To test balance and steering control while changing directions

Scoring: 100 pts. Two times around wthout riding outside of the lines or losing balance.
90 pts. One mistake of riding outside the lines, or losing balance.
80 pts. Two mistakes of riding outside the lines or losing balance.
70 pts. More than two mistakes.

Lesson 4 Safe Riding Skills (Testing and Scoring)

Test # 4 Weaving and Maneuvering

Using the diagram on page 17 of the SWRS book, lay out the station on the floor.

Purpose: To test balance, steering control, and rider's ability to judge distance. The rider shouldn't hit the obstacles and should weave alernately to the right and left. Have the student ride back in the same pattern alternately.

Scoring; 100 pts. Down and back without hitting any cones, making each turn, and not losing balance.
90 pts. Down and back, hitting only one cone, mising a turn, or losing balance.
80 pts. Down and back with only two hits or misses or losing balance or a combination.
70 pts. More than three hits or misses or balance losses.

Test # 5 Stopping Ability

Using the diagram on page 17 of the SWRS book, lay out the station on the floor.

Purpose: Test judgment and braking control. Rider should ride through the first 50 feet and be able to bring the bike to a complete stop before touching either foot to the ground within the last 10 feet. Have students return the same way.

Scoring; 100 pts. Riding the distance, braking after the 50-ft. line and stopping before touching either foot to the ground.
90 pts. One mistake of braking too soon, touching either foot before stopping, or going over the end line.
80 pts. Two mistakes of any of the above combinations.
70 pts. Three or more mistakes.

Test # 6 Turn Look, Stop, Signal, Look for Traffic

Use the diagram of the intersection on page 19 of the SWRS book

Purpose: To teach students to look, stop under control, signal before turning, and prepare them to make a street turn. You can test one or two or any number of skills practiced during the intersection drills.

Scoring 100 pts. Riding toward the corner, looking and recogonizing the number held up, stopping under control, signaling a left hand turn, looking right, left, right again and putting the start pedal at 10:00.
90 pts. Omitting one of the above or losing control.
80 pts. Two mistakes of any of the above combinations.
70 pts. Three or more mistakes in the above combinations.

Addendum

Section

V

School Bicycle Safety Plan

To achieve the goals of a comprehensive bicycle safety education program, a wide variety of strategies can be implemented. Some are program related, others concern school and government policy, and some encourage community-wide involvement. A combination of all these approaches will be most effective in implementing traffic and bicycle safety education and safe ways to school for children. The following is a 13-step approach to a School Bicycle Safety Plan. This plan is courtesy of the Florida Bicycle Safety Education Program.

STEP 1: Conduct a trip survey at your school to determine how many children presently walk, bicycle, or come by school bus, city bus, or private automobile.

STEP 2: Survey parents and children in your school to learn what they perceive as the barriers to children bicycling to and from school and other community activities.

STEP 3: Develop a transportation plan for your school, based on these surveys and other data available from the city and county departments, such as accident reports and traffic counts on adjacent roadways and intersections near your school.

STEP 4: Provide safe walking and bicycling route maps for all students.

STEP 5: Hold parent "Bike-to-School" nights and other awareness workshops for traffic and bicycle safety that includes families.

STEP 6: Organize walking and bicycling pools within neighborhoods. Develop a "buddy system" that pairs older and younger school children attending the same neighborhood sites.

STEP 7: Organize a helmet campaign, either in the school or as a community program.

STEP 8: Collabrate with the local police and sheriff departments to institute formalized "Office Friendly" and School Resource Office training programs. Encourage Bicycle Patrols in and around school zones during hours when children are biking to and from school.

STEP 9: Integrate the concepts of bicycling for transportation into other subjects.

Science: Compare energy used to walk, bike, drive a car or take a bus. Explore impact of transportation on the natural enviroment and conservation of natural resources.

Social Studies: Study the history of transportation from walking to the bicycle, automobile, bus, train, etc. Collect newspaper articles about bicycle crashes and other bicycle issues in your town or area. Write opinion papers or letters to the editor.

Mathematics: Practice math problems comparing distances traveled and speeds in walking, bicycling or riding in a car. Make distance/time graphs for various modes of transportation.

Language Arts: Choose stories about walking or bicycling; choose spelling words that relate to walking or bicycling; label the parts of a bicycle as a spelling assignment; create stories about biking adventures.

Art: Design future bikes and clothing for bicycling. Make posters, collages or mobiles about safe bicycling.
Health: Make a chart of calories burned in bicycling for time or distance. List and explain reasons why bicycling is healthy for people and for the enviroment.

STEP 10: Involve the community

- organize neighborhood associations to address safety and security.
- work with the city planning, engineering, public works and police departments to improve urban site and traffic design,roadway and trail maintenance, and the security of the neighborhood.
- devise neighborhood-wide programs that will enhance involvement by entire families in safe bicycling activities, rodeos, and bike festivals.

STEP 11: Parent/Teacher Associations and other school-related community organizations can provide sponsorships, in-kind donations and/or volunteers to:

- locate funding for training programs, curriculum,training materials, and equipment;
- provide volunteers and/or lunches for teachers training sessions on traffic.bicycle safety education;
- institute scholarship funds and bicycle donations for children who need assistance with equipment (helmets);
- sponsor helmet or other safety campaigns and special events; and
- organize lobbying efforts to secure state and local funds for programs that improve safety near schools.

STEP 12: Local merchants who deal in bicycle products and/or services can become involved in the following ways :

- provide free or low-cost parts and service to maintain bicycles used in school training programs;
- donate bike helmets or other equipment to schools;
- organize local bike safety and maintenance fairs; and
- make school presentations on equipment, attire, maintenance and cycling sports.

STEP 13: Media cooperation and participation can increase public awareness for traffic safety, Involvement includes:

- public service announcements for television and radio;
- articles in newspapers, corporate and organization newsletters; and
- news features on television and radio.

In conclusion, providing a comprehensive program , in addition to the enclosed curriculum, of safe ways to school must be a shared responsibility by many people working cooperatively for a safer place for children and a better world for all of us.

Form Letter for Parents
on School Biking/Walking Maps

Date:

Dear Parents or Guardians:

With the support and cooperation of your child's physical education teacher, the City of _____ is working to ensure the safety of children traveling to and from school. To this end, the map on the back has been developed to facilitate your selection of safe routes to school. It indicates the location of traffic signals, cross walks, school speed zone flashers, crossing guards, and bicycle paths or sidewalks in the vicinity of the school.

Please take a few minutes with your child to discuss and select a safe route which is direct, has sidewalks (or a wide shoulder), and utilizes available bicycling facilities. Let your child mark the route that you have chosen together on the map. Then walk or ride the route with your child and explain safe trip procedures.

The importance of a bicycle safety curriculum in schools is to demonstrate through statistics that reveal children face a greater likelihood of death or disability through traffic related crashes than any other cause. Additionally, bicycle fatalities account for more deaths to children (ages 5-9) than any others combined. Helping children develop safe traffic behaviors such as stopping at the edge, scanning to the rear, signaling, and avoiding hazards are skills that can help save their lives. Well selected routes for bicycling to school enhance these safe traffic behaviors.

Thank you for educating your child about safe road principles and for helping us create a more hospitable environment for children traveling to and from school. Making the roads safe is everyone's responsibility, especially where children are concerned. If you have any questions or suggestions for improvments that are needed in your area please call_____.

Sincerely,

Form letter courtesy of Florida Traffic and Bicycle Education Program

Sample School Activity Participation Letter and Form

Dear Parent:

On (date), the School Board authorized the implementation of a classroom and on-bicycle safety education program at _____Elementary School.

The primary purpose of the program is to teach children bicycle and traffic safety principles and how to avoid high frequency bicycle accident situations such as: riding bicycles into a roadway without looking in each direction for oncoming vehicles; not watching for cars backing out of driveways; or not recognizing visual barriers.

On-bicycle instruction will be conducted during regularly scheduled physical education classes. Instruction will emphasize riding strategies: looking behind, entering different types of roadways; and negotiating intersections. Assistance in conducting this phase of instruction may be provided by police officers, fire safety officers, school safety patrol members, volunteer aides, interested parents, bicycle club members, and interested students. Please return the form shown below on or before_____ giving your child permission to participate or requesting your child be excluded from the program. Please call_____
if you are interested in assisting with the program.

Sincerely,

Name of School _____
Date_____

Subject _____ Activity Planned
_____

Purpose of Activity_____

Date of Activity_____
Cost_____

Please (circle one) include/exclude my son/daughter_____
from participation in the described activity.

Signature_____ Home Telephone_____

Bicycle Resource Centers in Your AEA

AEA # 1

Decorah Bicycles
101 college Dr.
Decorah, IA 52101
563-382-8209

Cambia Coatings
308 3rd NE
Dyersville, IA 52040
563-875-7425

Linear Manufacturing
32744 Kestrel Ave.
Guttenberg, IA 52052
563-252-1637

JJam's Bicycle & Repairs
721 E. Fayette St.
Manchester, IA 52057
563-927-5826

J & L Sport & Bike
25 E. Charles St.
Oelwein, IA 50662
319-283-3308

Oneota River Cycles
220 E. Water St.
Decorah, IA 52101
563-382-0421

Bicycle World
1072 Central Ave.
Dubuque, IA 52001
563-556-6122

Bike Shack
3250 Dodge St.
Dubuque, IA 52001
563-582-4381

Free Flight Bikes
5010 Wolff & Radford Rds
Dubuque, IA 52001
563-582-4500

McNeill Hardware
201 E. 1st
Monticello, IA 52310
319-465-4286

AEA # 2

Lakeside Cyclery
Oakwood Park
Clear Lake, IA 50428
515-357-4660

On Two Wheels
607 E. Main Ave.
Rockford, IA 50468
641-756-2398

Mark's Bike Shack
629 Main St.
Osage, IA 50461
641-732-1163

Bennett's Bike & Fitness
30 State St. E.
Mason City, IA 50401
515-424-4151

Wayne's Cycle
Hwy. 18 W.
Mason City, IA 50401
641-423-2851

AEA # 3

Lubenow Bike Shop
Jct. Hwy. 19 & 15 SW
Armstrong, IA 50514
712-868-3844

Okoboji Bikes
575 Hwy. 71 S.
Arnolds Park, IA 51331
712-332-5274

Expedition Company
1021 Hwy. 71 S.
Okoboji, IA 51355
712-332-9007

Bikes Boards & Skates
324 Grand Ave.
Spencer, IA 51301
712-264-1068

Cycle Sport
2712 Highway Blvd.
Spencer, IA 51301
712-262-9333

AEA # 4

County Bikes
651 9th SW
Sioux Center, IA 51250
712-722-4673

AEA # 5

The Bike Shop
17 South 12th St.
Ft. Dodge, IA 50501
515-576-5992

Lakeshore Cyclery
1523 E. Lakeshore Dr.
Storm Lake, IA 50588
712-732-4115

AEA # 6

Bikes To You
921 Broad St.
Grinnell, IA 50112
641-236-8600

Spoken Wheel Cyclery
420 Washington
Iowa Falls, IA 50126
641-648-2924

Mike's Bikes & Fitness
117 W. Main St.
Marshalltown, IA
50158
641-753-3320

Central Iowa BMX
30 State St. East
Newton, IA 50208
641-792-1465

Iowa Bike & Fitness
Hwy 18 W.
Newton, IA 50208
641-792-1780

AEA # 7

Europa Cycle & Ski
4302 University Ave.
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319-277-0734

Scheels All Sports
College Sq.
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
1-319-277-3033

Dick's Bike Repair
405 W. 2nd St.
Sumner, IA 50674
563-578-8334

Mark's Cyclery
104 E. Bremer Ave.
Waverly, IA 50677
319-352-3237

AEA # 9

Bicycle Adventure
30 State St. E.
Clinton, IA 52732
563-243-1011

River City Bike Shop
131 5th Ave. S.
Clinton, IA 52732
563-243-8000

Magellan Bike
202 S. Main St.
Maquoketa, IA 52060
563-652-0293

Harper's Cycling
1106 Grandview Ave.
Muscatine, IA 52761
563-263-4043

Jerry's & Sparky's
1819 E. Locust St.
Davenport, IA 52803
563-324-0270

On Two Wheels
3616 Eastern Ave.
Davenport, IA 52807
563-386-5533

Standard Byke Co.
736 Federal St.
Davenport, IA 52802
563-323-4894

Bicycle Resource Centers in Your AEA

Wolfe's Village Bike
1018 Mound St.
Davenport, IA 52803
563-326-4686

AEA # 10

Scheels All Sports
Coral Ridge Mall
Coralville, IA 52241
319-625-5500

Rider Sales
102 E. 3rd St.
Washington, IA 52353
319-653-5808

Racquet Master Bike
321 S. Gilbert St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
319-338-9401

World of Bikes
723 S. Gilbert St.
Iowa City, IA 52240
319-351-8337

Al's Bike Shop
834 3rd Pl.
Kalona, IA 52247
319-656-2638

Hall Bicycle Co.
419 2nd Ave. SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
319-362-1052

Cedar Valley Sports
901 Oakland Rd NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
319-363-6447

KarCity Big Wheels
622 Center Point Rd. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
319-363-9178

Northtowne Schwinn
1150 Blairs Ferry Rd. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
319-393-6557

AEA # 11

Bike Source
307 8th St. SW
Altoona, IA 50009
515-967-4414

Bike World Ames
126 South 3rd
Ames, IA 50010
515-232-3669

Skunk River Sports
308 Main St.
Ames, IA 50010
515-232-0322

Transition Cyclery
929 4th St.
Ames, IA 50010
515-232-9593

Bike Country
825 East First St.
Ankeny, IA 50021
515-964-5623

Sun Sports
206 W 5th St.
Carroll, IA 51401
712-792-6226

Precision Cyclery
324 29th St.
Des Moines, IA 50265
515-226-0172

Barr Bicycle
1710 NW 86th St.
Clive, IA 50325
515-223-6111

Bike World
5970 Ashworth Road
West Des Moines, IA 50266
515-222-1880

Bike World
2929 Merle Hay Rd.
Des Moines, IA 50310
515-255-7047

Bike World Warehouse
2401 Hickman Rd.
Des Moines, IA 50310
515-271-9161

Bill's Cyclery
441 SW 9th
Des Moines, IA 50315
877-459-8523

Irwin's Bike & Sport
5500 Merle Hay Rd.
Johnston, IA 50131
515-270-8304

Modern Bike
1515 E. Euclid
Des Moines, IA 50313
515-263-2000

Rasmussen Bicycle
301 Grand Ave.
West Des Moines, IA 50265

The Bicycle Shop
106 E. 2nd Ave.
Indianola, IA 50125
515-961-4742

Doghouse Bikes
103 E. Salem Ave.
Indianola, IA 50125
515-961-5859

Red Rock Cycle & Fitness
1246 Illinois Dr.
Knoxville, IA 50138
641-842-5720

Bike Barn
414 NW 6th St.
Ogden, IA 50212
1-800-645-2981

Bill's Bike Shop
216 1st St.
Manning, IA 51455
712-653-2644

Iowa Bike & Fitness
808 Main St.
Pella, IA 50219
641-628-1373

Wick's Bike Shop
4828 Hillcrest Dr.
Pleasant Hill, IA 50317
515-262-6113

Rock River
904 1st
Redfield, IA 50233
515-833-2168

Don's Bicycle Shop
109 North 1St
Winterset, IA 50273
515-462-4741

AEA # 12

Letsche's Bike Shop
215 W. Main St.
Cherokee, IA 51012
712-225-3433

Cycle Shed
1207 240th Ave.
Corwith, IA 50430
515-583-2243

Albrecht Cycle Shop
200 5th St.
Sioux City, IA 51101
712-258-6050

Scheels All Sport
2829 Hamilton Blvd.
Sioux City, IA 51104
712-252-1551

AEA # 13

D & D's Bike Shop
1715 3rd Ave.
Council Bluffs, IA 51501
712-323-2332

Endless Trail Bike Shop
506 S. Main
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
712-322-9760

The Fitness Zone
1522 S. 3rd St.
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
712-329-9733

True Wheel Bicycle
120 W. Broadway St.
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
712-328-0767

Xtreme Wheels
1851 Madison Ave.
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
712-388-0800

AEA # 14

Donohue Bicycle Service
717 Center St.
Stanton, IA 51573
712-829-2534

Bicycle Rescorce Centers in Your AEA

AEA # 15

Pedal Power
710 Main St.
Oskaloosa, IA 52577
641-673-3842

Conn. Yankee Pedaller
908 Court Ave.
Chariton, IA 50049
641-862-4411

A J's Bicycle Shop
103 S. 2nd St.
Fairfield, IA 52556
641-472-1719

The Bike Shop
331 Church St.
Ottumwa, IA 52501
641-682-2024

Bike Barn
20528 Nuthatch Ave.
Bloomfield, IA 52537
641-664-3739

AEA # 16

Bickel's Cycle & Fitness
305 E. Agency Rd. W.
West Burlington, IA 52655
319-754-4410

Karl Fowler's Bikes
502 E. McKinley St.
New London, IA 52645
319-367-2351

All bicycle resources listed on these pages come from a variety of sources. It is not the intent of the Iowa Department of Transportation or FitOne Promotions to leave off any bike shops or clubs not listed.

This list is for resource only, and in no way are the bicycle related businesses listed here reponsible for assisting in the "Smart Wheeler Ride Safely" program.

Additional Bicycle Resources

Clubs, Safety Organizations, Sponsors, Non-Profit Groups, Etc.

Bicyclists of Iowa City, Inc.
P.O. Box 846
Iowa City, IA 52244
319-356-5206
kovaciny@inav.net

Bike Burlington
P.O. Box 1135
Burlington, IA 52601
319-753-1625

Central Iowa Cyclists
923 12th Ave. W.
Newton, IA 50208

Des Moines Cycle Club
P.O. Box 13258
Des Moines, IA 50310
dmcclub@aol.com

Iowa Valley Bicycle Club
113 S. 19th St.
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Lake Country Cyclists
P.O. Box 304
Ankeny, IA 50021
www.lakecountrycyclists.com

Quad Cities Bicycle Club
P.O. Box 3575
Davenport, IA 52808
oestreich@qconline.com
www.geocities.com/rcyclists

Rainbow Cyclists Waterloo
P.O. Box 2463
Waterloo, IA 50704
319-233-0128

Siouxland Cyclists
P.O. Box 3142
Sioux City, IA 51102

CIBROC
www.cibroc.com

Hawkeye Bicycle Association
www.hawkeyebike.com

Dubuque Bicycle Club
www.dbqbike.org

Riverbend Bicycle Club
P.O. Box 1571
Clinton, IA 52733